

Data Submitted (UTC 11): 1/8/2024 5:19:32 PM

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Organization:

Title:

Comments: Hello,

Thank your taking the time to read my comments. I have been a recreational climber for over 30 years. I have worked with both the National Park Service (as a climber) and US Forest Service as well as with Climbing stewardship organizations for many of those 30 years.

I feel that fixed anchors are essential to climber safety, and climbing is a legitimate use of public lands- including Wilderness areas. In recognition of this, Federal agencies have allowed fixed anchors for decades. It is especially important that fixed anchor replacement is allowed unimpeded. I have climbed many routes in Yosemite and elsewhere prior to the efforts of the American Safe Climbing Association and others to replaced fixed anchors. Many routes were extremely dangerous to climb and descend. I also do not believe the US Forest Service has the resources necessary to implement a permit system for the establishment of new routes or anchor replacements.

I do believe anchors should blend in with the surrounding rock when appropriate, and the use of hand drills- not motorized drills should be used. I however, have witnessed the use of helicopters (in non emergency situations) and chainsaws by Forest Service personnel in Wilderness areas (exclusions under the minimum impact), and feel that these rules should apply to everyone.

I also would support no new route development, and in some cases, route removal in areas of cultural and natural resource impact. I think the Federal Agencies could work with Local Climbing Organizations to address some of their concerns and possibly come up with collaborative solutions to educating climbers on where new route development is appropriate and where it is not. Almost every climbing area in this country has a Local Climbing Organization that helps to manage the climbing resource and educate climbers.

America has a rich climbing history on Wilderness lands (John Muir!) Climbing and developing routes is important to aspects of our sport that includes exploration and adventure and safety.

Sincerely,

Rachel Nelson